

Funding Pupil Transportation

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School Financial Services

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Pupil Transportation Overview

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- Regular transportation
- Specialized transportation
- McKinney-Vento homeless transportation

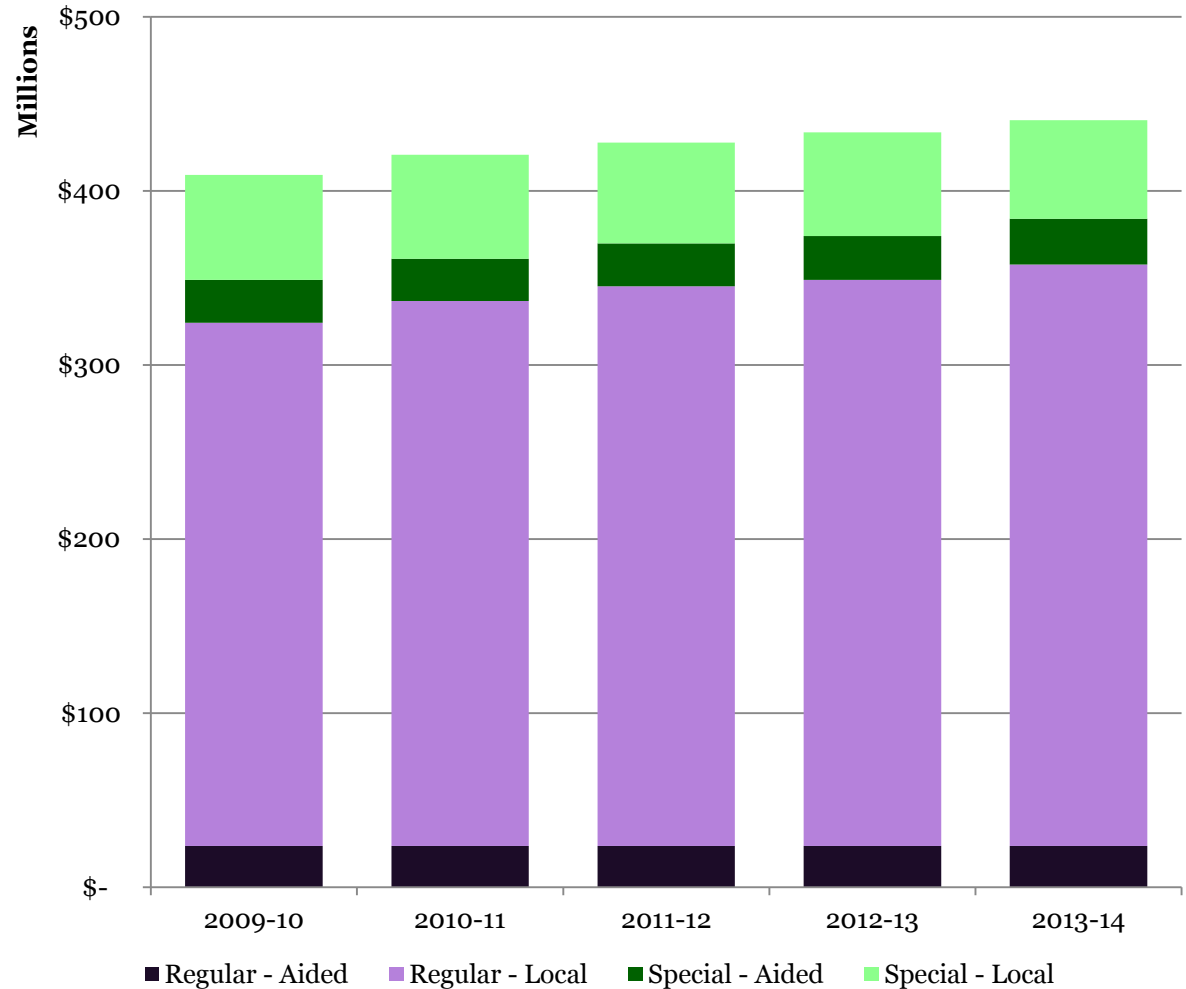
*From 2009-10
to 2013-14*

**Transportation was
4% of total
school spending**

**7% of regular pupil
transportation costs
were aided**

**30% of specialized
transportation
costs were aided**

Annual Transportation Costs



Section 121.54(2), Wisconsin Statutes

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A pupil attending a public or private elementary or secondary school, including four- and five-year-old kindergarten, is *entitled* to transportation by the public school district in which the pupil resides **if the pupil resides two or more miles from the nearest public school the pupil is entitled to attend**

Pupil Transportation Aid

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- State pupil transportation aids are determined under the provisions of s. 121.58, Wis. Stats.
- The appropriation for reimbursement of transporting public and nonpublic school pupils, **who are actually transported**, is found in s. 20.255(2)(cr), Wis. Stats.
- The rates are set by statute

Pupil Transportation Aid Rate Determination

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- Distances are measured from the pupil's residence to the school attended, following the shortest commonly traveled route
- Half payment is made for pupils **enrolled** and **actually** transported less than 91 days (regular year) or less than 16 days (summer school)
- Pupil transportation aid for the current year is based on the number of children transported during the prior school year

Regular Transportation Aid Rates / Category

Category	Distance from Home to School	Period of Enrollment	Aid per Pupil effective 07-01-13
1	0-2 Miles (Hazardous Area Transportation) *	1-90 Days	\$7.50
2	Over 2 through 5 Miles	1-90 Days	\$17.50
3	Over 5 through 8 Miles	1-90 Days	\$27.50
4	Over 8 through 12 Miles	1-90 Days	\$55.00
5	Over 12 Miles	1-90 Days	\$137.50
6	0-2 Miles (Hazardous Area Transportation) *	Over 90 Days	\$15.00
7	Over 2 through 5 Miles	Over 90 Days	\$35.00
8	Over 5 through 8 Miles	Over 90 Days	\$55.00
9	Over 8 through 12 Miles	Over 90 Days	\$110.00
10	Over 12 Miles	Over 90 Days	\$275.00

Summer School Categories

Note that the rate for 15 or less days is 50% of rate when Summer School goes over 15 days

Distance from Home to School	Period of Enrollment	Aid per Pupil effective 07-01-08
Over 2 through 5 Miles	1-15 Days	\$2.00
Over 5 Miles	1-15 Days	\$3.00
Over 2 through 5 Miles	Over 15 Days	\$4.00
Over 5 Miles	Over 15 Days	\$6.00

Membership Compared to Ridership

2012-2013 Annual	2013-2014	Transportation
Fund 10 Costs for Transportation	Membership	Ridership
\$357,701,147	856,955	515,749*

*** Ridership participation total includes:**

- Summer School (4 categories)
- Vocational School (8 categories)
- Regular School (10 Categories)

WI Regular Transportation Aid = \$23,703,600

- 6.63 % of Fund 10 Cost of Transportation

Specialized Transportation

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- Transportation services to fulfill IEPs
- Need must be documented in IEP
- Can include a variety of services
- Any required transportation— not just to and from school
 - PT and OT appointments, transition activities

How is specialized transportation determined?

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- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) applies
- When “...required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education...”
34 CFR 300.34 (a)
- IEP team decision at an IEP team meeting
 - Related services section of the IEP
- Consider the unique needs of the student -NOT administrative convenience, disability category, or financial incentive

Specialized transportation can take many forms

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- Regular transportation aide
- Ramp added to regular transportation
- Separate vehicle
- Separate vehicle with aide
- Taxis
- Public transportation
- Own vehicles and staff
- Third party contracts
- Parental reimbursement

Documentation for the IEP

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- Type of vehicle
- Specific equipment needed
- Personnel
- Picking up and dropping off procedures
- Location of pick up and drop off
- Harness or safety equipment
- Goals/objectives for transportation if there is an independent purpose (e.g., life skills, behavior)

Specialized Transportation Costs

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Costs eligible for state aid/federal funding

- Driver salary/benefits
- Parent contracts
- Transportation aide salary/benefits
- Operational costs
- Equipment purchases
- Vehicle insurance
- Vehicle lease
- Vehicle purchases (prior approval required)

Aid for Transportation

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Regular Transportation

- To and from school
- Specified by distance
- Can serve students with IEPs
- Aided at statutory per-pupil rate
- Did pupil ride the bus?

Specialized Transportation

- Any service needed
- Specified by IEP
- Cannot serve students without IEPs
- Aided at percentage of eligible costs
- Were services provided under the IEP?

Transportation – SPED Categorical Aid

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- Costs are coded to the appropriate transportation function, but identified as a fund 27 cost with a 011 project number
 - Identified on the PI-1505-SE Annual Report to determine aid reimbursement
- Audited through the state special education program audit
 - Did students have transportation specified in their IEPs?
 - Were students without IEPs served as well?
 - ✦ “Incidental Benefit”

Can a child without an IEP ride a specialized transportation route?

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No, unless...

- The child is specified in another rider's IEP as peer support
- The child is picked up and dropped off from the same location, they do not displace a rider with an IEP, and they do not increase the route's cost (**“Incidental Benefit”**)

In either case, the additional child may neither be charged a fee nor counted for pupil transportation aid

Transportation – SPED Categorical Aid

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- Audit Findings or Issues:
 - Student with an IEP transported on specialized AM/PM route coded to Fund 27 project 011, also counted for Pupil Transportation Aid
 - Student without IEP transported on specialized route
 - ✦ Do they meet the “incidental benefit” conditions?
 - IEP modified to no longer require transportation, but transportation arrangements do not change
 - District consolidates transportation for multiple “special” programs (SPED, ELL, Title I, etc.) and allocates route costs between them

Transportation – High Cost SPED Aid

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- High Cost Special Education Aid: Combination of state/federal funds reimbursing LEA for serving a student with total costs exceeding \$30,000
- Specialized transportation for a single student can be eligible for High Cost Special Education Aid
- See <http://sfs.dpi.wi.gov/highcost-sped> for details
 - Watch for updated guidance/resources this spring!

Transportation – IDEA Funds

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- Costs are submitted on the flow-through or preschool budget
- Reimbursement can be 100% of cost
- Costs are coded to the appropriate transportation function, but identified as a fund 27 cost with a 341 (flow-through) or 347 (preschool) project number

Vehicle Purchase

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Allowed, but...

- 100% of the vehicle use must be for special education – only special education, even if it is not in use (after school, weekends, summer, etc.)
- 100% of the vehicle use must be for special education even if only a portion of it is reimbursed with state categorical aid or IDEA grant funding
- Vehicle repurposing or disposal requires an offset to special education expenditures

McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

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- Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; reauthorized by Title X, Part C of ESEA (2002)
- Main themes:
 - School access
 - School stability
 - Support for academic success
 - Child-centered, best-interest decision making
 - Role of the local homeless education liaison

Homelessness Defined

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- **Fixed**
 - Stationary, permanent, not subject to change
- **Regular**
 - Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis
 - Consider the relative permanence
- **Adequate**
 - Lawfully and reasonably sufficient
 - Sufficient for meeting the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment

**Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed)
EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE
AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?**

Eligibility as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

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Common homeless living situations defined as homeless include:

- Sharing the housing of others **due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason** (sometimes referred to as doubled-up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- *Awaiting* foster care placement

Eligibility as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

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- Living in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used, as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances

School Selection

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Students experiencing homelessness may attend either:

- **The local attendance area school**
 - Any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend
- **The school of origin**
 - The school the child or youth attended when permanently housed; or
 - The school in which the child or youth was last enrolled

School of Origin

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- Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to remain in their school of origin
- School of origin — school attended when permanently housed **or** in which last enrolled
- Best interest — keep homeless students in their schools of origin, to the extent feasible, unless this is against the parents' or guardians' wishes

Transportation

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- Districts must transport homeless students to and from the school of origin, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth)
- If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same district, that district must arrange transportation
- If the student is living outside the district of origin, the district where the student is living and the district of origin must determine how to divide the responsibility and cost, or they must share the responsibility and cost equally

USDE Transportation Feasibility Factors

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To be considered

- Age
- Safety
- Length of stay at the shelter
- Need for special instructional programs
- Distance (impact on education)

Not to be considered

- Time
- Distance (impact on district)
- Cost

Transportation Strategies

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- Re-route school buses
- Add to existing bus route (including special education)
- Provide passes for public transportation
- Reimburse parents or unaccompanied youth for gas
- Use approved taxi or van services
- In cross district cases, homeless liaisons collaborate to determine appropriate and cost effective arrangements

Resolution of Disputes

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- Districts must establish a process for the prompt resolution of enrollment or school selection disputes
- If a disagreement occurs, the student must be admitted ***immediately*** to the school of choice and receive all services, including transportation, while the dispute is being resolved
- The district must:
 - Provide a written explanation of its decision, including the right to appeal the decision
 - Refer the parent/guardian/youth to the local liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible
- Unaccompanied homeless youth have the same right to dispute as parents/guardians

The Title I, Part A Set-aside

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- Districts must set aside Title I, Part A funds (or use local or state funds) to:
 - Serve students experiencing homelessness not attending Title I schools
 - Provide services comparable to those provided to children attending Title I schools
- Districts may provide students experiencing homelessness with services that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I permanently housed students and are not available from other sources

Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014

This act was signed into law on January 17, 2014. It included two policy changes regarding serving children and youth experiencing homelessness with Title I:

1. Title I funds may be used to provide transportation to the school of origin by offsetting the excess cost of transporting children and youth experiencing homelessness to/from the school of origin
2. Title I funds may be used to fund all or part of the homeless liaison's salary, even if that person has no Title I duties

Excess Cost of providing transportation for students experiencing homelessness

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LEAs may consider the following to be excess cost:

- calculating a per pupil amount for transportation when rerouting a school bus, including special transportation, provided by State and local funds and determining the additional cost to be excess
- using taxicabs
- private shuttle busses
- gas cards
- reimbursing for mileage

Scenario 1

A student lives in *and* attends District A (school of origin). Student moves into a shelter in District B. District A and B share transportation costs so that the student may attend the school of origin. With two months left of school, the family finds permanent housing in District C.

- 1) Which district is “school of origin?” **District A**
- 2) Is the student still eligible to attend the school of origin? **Yes**
- 3) Is the student eligible for transportation to the school of origin and if so, how can it be funded?

No, the district is not required to continue transportation to the school of origin because the student is permanently housed, *however*, District A may **choose to provide transportation and fund through local or Title I funds**

Scenario 2

A family was evicted from their house due to a job loss and is now living doubled-up with relatives in a different school district. The commute is 60 minutes one-way. There are three children in the family: a 10th grader, a 5th grader, and a kindergartner. The kids were enrolled in and attended School A prior to the move. The family wants the children to continue to attend School A. The family plans to move back to the district once they can save enough money to afford the security deposit and rent.

- 1) Is this a homeless situation? **Yes**
- 2) What are the districts' transportation responsibilities?
Provide transportation to the school of origin, School A
- 3) What should be considered?
Consideration of distance - Long commute for a 5-year-old (two hours daily) - but still allowable if parent chooses school of origin

Scenario 3

An 18-year-old student is permanently housed with parents, enrolled in and attends Johnson High School in Johnson School District. Student chooses to leave home due to constant fighting with parents and moves in with an aunt in Bachman School District. The student enrolls in and attends Bachman High School. Student gets into a fight with the aunt and gets kicked out. Student doubles up with a friend in Cruzer School District.

- 1) What McKinney-Vento enrollment rights does this student have?

Rights to attend school of origin (Johnson HS or Bachman HS) or school of residence (high school in Cruzer School District)

- 2) What school is the school of origin?

Both Johnson HS and Bachman HS are schools of origin. Student attended Johnson HS “when permanently housed” and attended Bachman HS “when last enrolled”

- 3) Who pays for transportation?

- If attending Johnson HS (Johnson and Cruzer school districts determine how to share cost)
- If attending Bachman HS (Bachman and Cruzer school districts determine how to share cost)
- If attending Cruzer HS - Transportation would be comparable to what permanently housed peers in Cruzer School District receive (unless extenuating circumstance where safety is a factor and then transportation may be provided)

Specific Issues

Charging fees for pupil transportation

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- Sec. 121.54(8) prohibits a school board from charging pupils or their parents for transportation that the school district is required by law to provide
- As allowed under WI Stat. 121.545(1) and 121.54(2)(c)
- Thus it is possible for a school district to charge a fee to transport student who live within two miles of school and not in Unusually Hazardous Transportation area
- Example: In the Mount Horeb, students in grades 6-12 who live within two miles of the Middle School or High School and do not live within designated hazardous areas will only be allowed to ride the school bus to and from school by paying a bus ridership fee of \$200 per family

504 Plans and Transportation

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If transportation is required through a 504 plan, but not in an IEP, can the cost still qualify for state or federal special education aid?

No

- Only costs tied to an IEP are eligible for state and federal special education aid
- Like all 504 costs where the service is not in an IEP, it belongs in Fund 10

Can a vehicle cross district boundaries to provide transportation described in an IEP or to a homeless student?

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YES!

If the transportation is needed for the student to benefit from, or participate in, special education services it must be provided regardless of district boundaries.

Students who are homeless have a right to transportation to and from the school of origin, districts agree to transportation

Technical Assistance

Pupil Transportation Aid

http://sfs.dpi.wi.gov/sfs_pupiltran1

Special Education Transportation Overview

<http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/pdf/spec-ed-transportation-overview.pdf>

Specialized Transportation Aid Eligibility and Funding

<http://sfs.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sfs/pdf/SPED%20Tran%20Aid%20Elig.pdf>

Mc-Kinney Vento Transportation:

http://homeless.dpi.wi.gov/hmls_trans_legislative

Team Contacts

- **Special Education:** http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_hmstaff
- **School Financial Services:** http://sfs.dpi.wi.gov/sfs_staffdir
- **Education for Homeless Children and Youth:** http://homeless.dpi.wi.gov/hmls_staff